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FOR ARMSTRONG AND SCRANTON ONLY

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM SCHAUFELLE

DEPT PASS LONDON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJ: RHODESIAN CONFERENCE: PROSPECTS FOR MOVING

CONFERENCE FORWARD

1. MY TELEGRAMS REPORTING CONVERSATIONS WITH NATIONALISTS
LEADERS REFLECTS OPTIMISM PREVAILING AMONG THEM EVEN
THOUGH QUESTION OF INDEPENDENCE DATE HAS NOT BEEN
RESOLVED. THEY ALSO INDICATE THAT NATIONALISTS ARE NOT
INCLINED TO FORCE CONFERENCE BREAKDOWN OVER THIS ISSUE.

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2. RICHARD CONFIRMS THE MOOD. IT WAS AT OBSERVERS'

REQUEST THAT HE AGREED TO ALLOW PLENARY TO END WITHOUT DECISION TODAY AND TO CONTINUE BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS OVER THE WEEKEND.

3. I TOLD RICHARD THAT HE COULD ONLY ALLOW THIS TO GO ON SO LONG. NATIONALISTS ARE SO EUPHORIC ABOUT THEIR NEW-FOUND SENSE OF UNITY OVER THIS ISSUE THAT THEY SEEM TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT THEY ARE HERE TO ESTABLISH AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. NATIONALIST UNITY, FRAGILE IN ANY CASE, WOULD MEAN LITTLE IF THE CONFERENCE WERE NOT SUCCESSFUL.

4. I NOTED THAT ALL THE PUBLIC ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON NATIONALISTS' REFUSAL TO ACCEPT ANY MORE THAN TWELVE MONTHS BUT IGNORES RHODESIAN VIEWPOINT WHICH IS REALLY MORE FLEXIBLE - I.E., THEY THINK IT WOULD TAKE 23 MONTHS BUT IF PROCESS COULD BE COMPLETED EARLIER THAT WOULD BE ALL RIGHT. IT IS MY VIEW HOWEVER THAT RHODESIANS WILL NOT NOW FORMALLY AGREE TO A SPECIFIC TIMEFRAME OF EVEN 15 MONTHS.

5. AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSION RICHARD SUGGESTED THAT, IF AGREEMENT NOT ACHIEVED, HE MIGHT SAY SOMETHING ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: THE PARTICIPANTS AGREE THAT INDEPENDENCE SHOULD BE ACHIEVED AFTER THE NECESSARY CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL STEPS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS BELIEVE THIS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IN 12 MONTHS. THE RHODESIANS BELIEVE IT WILL TAKE 23 MONTHS BUT ACCEPT THE IDEA OF LESS TIME IF THE PROCESS CAN BE COMPLETED IN THAT PERIOD. THE BRITISH BELIEVE IT WILL REQUIRE 15 MONTHS.

6. RICHARD WOULD THEN MOVE ON TO DISCUSSION OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT. I SAID I THOUGHT THIS WAS WORTH TRYING.

7. PROBLEM IS THAT IF BRITISH HAD BEEN MORE FORCEFUL EARLIER QUESTION MIGHT HAVE ALREADY BEEN SOLVED - WITH MUTTERINGS FROM BOTH SIDES. PROCESS HAS NOW BECOME SO PROTRACTED THAT DELEGATIONS MIGHT NOT BE WILLING TO ACCEPT MORE FORCEFUL BRITISH APPROACH WITHOUT
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THEIR EXPLICIT AGREEMENT.

8. I WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH AT RICHARD ON THIS OVER THE WEEKEND.CATTO

UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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